

Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry Forest Landowner Assistance Program



The mission of the Division of Forestry's landowner assistance program is to *provide professional, timely, up-to-date, science-based technical assistance to forest landowners*. Providing quality technical assistance is critical in reaching our goal of *increased sustainability of forest products and non-timber benefits on non-industrial private forestlands*. The services offered through the Division's Forest Landowner Assistance Programs are designed to help Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) landowners identify and pursue opportunities to increase the health, productivity, and sustainability of their forests.

The Division offers two general types of assistance to help NIPF landowners manage their forests. Technical assistance, or Information and planning assistance, is offered to NIPF landowners through individualized management plans, published materials, and/or group presentations. Financial assistance, or cost-share assistance, is offered to NIPF landowners through various federal and state funded cost-share programs.

Technical Assistance

The Division's technical assistance efforts are designed to provide information to NIPF landowners relative to maintaining the health and productivity of their forests. By providing such information we hope to encourage NIPFs to actively manage their forests. Active management leads to increased sustainability of forest products and non-timber benefits.

Information is provided to NIPF landowners through various methods, including printed material, the Division's web site, group presentations, county forest landowner associations, and forest management planning assistance. The Division has brochures, pamphlets, and booklets providing information on topics ranging from "how to market your timber" to "enhancing forest beauty" to "forestry distilled for landowners" (much of this information is available on the Division's web site: <http://www.state.tn.us/agriculture/forestry/>). Depending on landowner objectives and needs, forest management planning assistance is offered for various purposes at several levels of detail. Forest management planning assistance offered by the Division is described below:

Plan Type	Scope	Coverage	Level of Detail	Management Recommendations	Time Frame
Forest stewardship plan	Comprehensive – addresses multiple use objectives	All forestland and potential forestland	Moderate or low	Brief – specifies what to do but not the details of how, when, who, etc. Also describes first steps to take in implementing plan, e.g., "apply to Division of Forestry for cost-sharing."	10 years
EQIP Forest Habitat Plan	Comprehensive – habitat improvement for greatest conservation need plants and animals and providing for timber production	All forestland and potential forestland specified by landowner	Moderate or low	Brief – specifies what to do but not the details (how, when, who, etc) of management practices accepted by landowner	10 years
"Other" forest management plans	A comprehensive – single or limited objectives	All forestland and potential forestland specified by landowner	Moderate or low	Brief – specifies what to do but not the details of how, when, who, etc. Also describes first steps to take in implementing plan, e.g., "apply to Division of Forestry for cost-sharing."	10 years
	B. specific – single or limited objectives	Usually a specific problem or inquiry – may involve a portion or all forestland	High	Inclusive – answers landowner's detailed concerns and specifies what, when, how, etc., to remedy the problem or satisfy the landowner's management objectives.	Immediate or non-specific
Forestry prescription plans	Single forestry practice – one or more management objectives	Specific treatment area	High	Inclusive – provides detailed information for each step of practice that enables the landowner/manager to carry out the practice and achieve his/her management objectives.	Covers span of time of practice treatment

Financial Assistance

The Division offers financial assistance to NIPF landowners through various cost-share programs. Cost-share programs are designed to provide financial incentives to encourage NIPF landowners to implement forest practices on the ground. Cost-share programs are offered by different agencies to achieve different objectives under variable timeframes. Cost-share opportunities currently available to NIPF landowners are described below:

Program	Administrator/ Technical Assistance	Program Objective	Eligible Land	Length of Agreement	Incentive
C onservation R eserve P rogram	Farm Services Agency/TDA, Division of Forestry	Conservation, water quality, wildlife habitat improvement	Highly erodible cropland that has been planted for 4 of the 6 years preceding enactment of the 2002 law. Some marginal pastureland is also available	10-15 years	Annual rental payment based on length of agreement; 50% cost-share to help install practices
E nvironmental Q uality I ncentives P rogram	Natural Resource Conservation Service/NRCS	Conservation of water, air, and soil and promotion of at-risk species habitat	All private land in agricultural production; includes cropland, grassland, pastureland and non-industrial private forestland	1-10 years	Technical assistance, incentive payments, and up to 75% cost-shares to help install practices
W ildlife H abitat I ncentives P rogram	Natural Resource Conservation Service/NRCS	Restore native wildlife habitat, protect habitat for at-risk species, and reduce invasive sp.	All private lands unless currently enrolled in CRP, WRP or a similar program	5-15 years	Up to 75% cost-share to help install practices
W etland R eserve P rogram	Natural Resource Conservation Service/NRCS	Restore and protect habitat for migratory birds and wetland wildlife	Wetlands converted to agricultural use prior to 1985.	10 or 30 years or permanent easement	Up to 100% cost-share to help install practices
T N A gricultural E nhancement P rogram	TDA, Division of Forestry/TDA, Division of Forestry	Forest stand establishment and improvement	Non-industrial private forestlands greater than 10 acres	10 years	Up to 50% cost-share to help install practices
S outhern P ine B eetle I nitiative	TDA, Division of Forestry/TDA, Division of Forestry	Reduce vulnerability of pine stands to southern pine beetle	Non-industrial private forestlands greater than 5 acres with 50% or more pine species	10 years	50% cost-share to help install practices
T N L andowner I ncentive P rogram	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency/TWRA	Protect, enhance, or restore rare species habitats	Non-industrial private landowners	(Not available)	Technical assistance, incentive payments, and up to 75% cost-shares to help install practices
Free Seedlings	Various agencies & forest industries	Soil and water quality protection & timber production	Non-industrial private landowners	Variable	Free Seedlings

The variability associated with cost-share programs can be confusing. The Division's roll for specific programs varies from marketing other agencies programs to 100% program administration. The above table briefly explains current cost-share opportunities. Contact the local office of the agencies listed under **Administrator/Technical Assistance** for additional program information.

Other Sources of Assistance

The Division's services to NIPF landowners do not extend to long term management contracts, assessing forest values for taxation or timber trespass issues, timber sale administration, surveying, or acting as a landowner's business agent. These services are more appropriately provided by private forestry consultants. Forestry consultants provide a wide range of forest business and management services. Contact your local Area Forester office or refer to the Division's web site for listings of private forestry consultants.

Promoting public forestry programs that protect, conserve, manage, and efficiently utilize the forest resources of Tennessee.